

## **RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE AND CHILD PLACING AGENCIES**

Under the authority of Sections 210.481 – 210.536, RSMo, the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is required to assess and issue licenses for residential child care agencies while The Department of Social Services, Children's Division (CD) is required to do the same with child placing agencies. However, by mutual agreement, CD provides regulatory services for both the residential child care and child placing agencies. It is anticipated that proposed legislation will soon provide legal authority for CD to continue to be the regulatory authority for residential child care agencies (RCCA). Foster, relative, and adoptive homes are assessed and approved by staff at the local level, while other licensing activities are provided by the Residential Program Unit (RPU) within CD's Central Office. RPU is responsible for the licensing of private agencies that provide residential child care and child placing activities. Licensed child placing agencies provide foster care and adoptive services. These licensed agencies are monitored through inspections conducted during the licensure period to ensure maintenance of standards and compliance with the law and applicable rules. Enforcement is achieved through the licensing process. In an effort to encourage "best practice", the state of Missouri passed legislation in 2004, recognizing those agencies that are accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), and the Council on Accreditation of Rehabilitative Facilities (CARF), as prima facie evidence that they meet the requirements for licensure. Currently, thirty-two (32) of the eighty-four (84) licensed RCCA's are accredited and thirteen (13) of the seventy-four (74) CP agencies are accredited.

In 2004 there were seven (7) initial licenses and thirty-three (33) renewal licenses awarded to private Child Placing Agencies. In 2004 there were two (2) initial residential child care agency licenses and twenty-four (24) residential child care agency renewal licenses awarded.